WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY - Founded December 17, 1857 NOV. - DEC. 1990

WASHTENAW IMPRESSIONS

FROM THE PRESIDENT

HOUSE STABLE ON ITS FOUNDATION, OFFICE OPEN, TOWSLEY SUPPORT BOOSTS WCHS FUND CAMPAIGN

We feel very fortunate to be the recipient of a wonderful donation to our MUSEUM ON MAIN STREET Building Fund from Margaret D. Towsley. Best of all, she has agreed to be the Honorary Chairman of our financial campaign.

We are so grateful for her assistance, particularly at this time. The Towsley family generously supports so many worthwhile projects in our community.

Ann Arbor would be a very different place without their active interest. Dr. and Mrs. Towsley are long-time members of the Historical Society. We so appreciate their interest in the museum project.

The beams which supported our house during its move from Wall Street to Main Street have now been removed, and the house has been set down on its new foundation.

Work is going on to complete the basement, and to secure the house for the winter. We are on schedule for completion of Phase I of our project--moving the house and getting it stable on its new foundation.

Our office in the Goodyear Building, 122 South Main Street, Suite 250 (at the top of the escalator on the second floor) is in operation.

Instead of an answering machine, we now have Pauline Walters in the office, providing a face and a smile for the Society. We will be open here until we can move into the Museum.

If you were not able to stop by in October during the "Office Warming Days," don't hesitate to come in anytime to see our new headquarters.

Doug Ziesemer of Investall arranged to have the space donated to us. Having an office is a real help and we are so grateful.

Please call with your ideas or questions, or offers of help!

Karen O'Neal 665-2242 or WCHS Office 662-9092

HOW TO JOIN WCHS

Send name, address and phone number with check or money order payable to Washtenaw County Historical Society to: WCHS Membership, 122 South Main, Suite 250, Ann Arbor, MI 48104-1903. Information: 662-9092.

Annual dues are $10, individual; $18 a couple. Senior individual (60) $8, senior couple, $14. Sustaining dues are $50, commercial, $25, and student, $5. Only one of a couple need be 60 to qualify as seniors.

CERTIFICATE OFFERED

Hand-lettered certificates are offered free of charge, framed if desired, by WCHS to organizations for milestone anniversaries. Information: 663-8826.

DOLLHOUSE ON DISPLAY

The Victorian-style dollhouse made and given to WCHS by Lewis Hodges will be on display in a Jacobson's shop window during the Christmas season.

WCHS MEMBERS INVITED TO STUFF BALLOT BOX

Please visit Englander's Furniture Store, 2333 South State Street, between November 21 and December 12, and vote a dollar for the WCHS Christmas tree.

If our tree gets the most votes, we can win $1,000. Any of the votes we get — and any prize money! — will go directly to our Museum Building Fund.

WWII B-24 BOMBER MADE AT WILLOW RUN WILL BE NOVEMBER WCHS TOPIC

The B-24 Liberator Bomber, the plane that made Willow Run famous and helped win World War II, will be the topic of the WCHS meeting at 2 p.m. Sunday, November 18, at Bentley Library.

Historian Flavia P. Reps and John Debbink, a former B-24 head pilot, will present a program, "The B-24 Liberator Bomber from Ground to Air."

Debbink, now a retired General Motors vice-president living in Ann Arbor, will talk about his experiences piloting the plane.

Ms. Reps will show a Ford Motor Company film of the building of the planes on the mile-long production line in the then largest industrial plant in the world and a video of the interior of a now rare B-24 which visited Willow Run this past summer.

Ms. Reps, a history teacher at Washtenaw Community College, has conducted a long-term oral history study on "The Impact of World War II on Willow Run."

There are still today thousands of people in southeast Michigan who worked there or remember the impact of the plant. Ms. Reps' WCHS program three years ago, based on interviews with people who were there, attracted a large audience.

The meeting is open to the public and anyone with Willow Run Bomber Plant or B-24 memories is especially invited. Refreshments will be served. Free parking Sundays across from the library. More information: 663-2017 or 663-8826.

HOLIDAY MEETING SET

A WCHS Christmas reception will be at 2 p.m. Sunday, December 9, at the University of Michigan's Clements Library, 909 South University. Holiday decorations will include WCHS toys around the tree.

A postcard reminder with more details will be sent later. Punch and cookies will be served.

ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS BEING RESTORED

LEST WE FORGET THE ROOTS OF EDUCATION

If the folks at the October WCHS meeting have their way, one-room country schools won't just fade into the forgotten past.

Most of those present either attended or taught in a country school, now live in one, have restored one or were, at least, interested in their restoration.

Wayne Clements, president of Saline Historical Society which would like to restore a one-room school, presented a panel of speakers and an extensive display about "Country Schools--Past, Present and Future."

Marilou Warner, WCHS vice-president, in introducing him, said she is a product of a country school in Wayne County and she valued the sense of community she got from it.

Clement's Saline Society held a meeting about school preservation in 1989 which attracted about 100 persons. For the meeting they had put together the exhibit boards that he displayed. There was a panel for each of about 30 schools, with pictures, clippings and other mementos.

The boards can be quickly folded, to protect the materials on the boards, and stored in plastic jackets until next used. They have shown the school exhibit at Saline Summer Fest and twice at the Saline Alumni Association banquet, so far.

Each board is topped with a "cap," cut in the frontal outline of a typical school roof with bell tower, attractively tying the exhibit together.

They also videotaped that meeting which included entertaining reminiscences about country schools, added music and titles and placed a copy (VHS format) on file at the Saline Library for loan.

At Saline they also put together a brochure listing 55 former one-room schools or sites in the area with a map locating them. More than half are now homes.

"We like these things because they give continuity to our program. I get tired of reinventing the wheel all the time. We are trying to do things that are additive. Next year we can add to it.

"The meeting generated interest and now we have other material coming in. Our question now is where do we go next? We have a couple possible schools to bring in (Blaess or Schumacher), we don't have any money.

Courtesy of Paul, Liz Kleinschmidt

Boyden School in Webster township before it was torn down. It stood on the west side of Jennings Road between Joy and Northfield Church roads. Gilbert Whitney, a nearby resident, in photo.

"The sooner we get information and directions established the better. Just over the last two weeks a long-time Saline area teacher passed away and the Mills School on Ann Arbor-Saline at Lohr Road near Briarwood had a fire that destroyed the interior."

BOYDEN MODEL EXHIBITED

Clements asked Paul Kleinschmidt of Webster township to tell about the detailed model of Boyden School that he has made of it as he remembers it when he attended. The model is fully furnished with tiny desks, map case, a picture of George Washington etc. The windows even open.

It was modeled on the white frame Boyden School that formerly stood on Jennings Road between Joy and Northfield Church Roads.

Kleinschmidt told how two pioneer settlers named Boyden and Alexander came to a tree. Boyden took up land east of it and Alexander west of it in what was to become Webster township.

"In 1830 Boyden built a log school on his land, the first in the township. That went on for about ten years. Then they tore that down and built a frame school, 22 by 24 feet, that stayed around until 1884. Then they built the 24 by 32 feet building (that Kleinschmidt modeled) across the road.

"I went there eight years and never had another kid in my class. It was a big difference to go into Dexter to high school," he noted.

Liz Kleinschmidt, his wife, noted that Boyden and Coyle Schools, both once on Jennings Road, no longer exist but six other former township school buildings survive. Coyle School dated back to 1838.

Other Webster Schools are:

Church, 1839, Webster Church Road at Farrell, now moved across the road and attached to Webster Church.

Peatt, Gregory at Vaughn Road, first log school ca.1836-38, present brick building, 1845, in bad condition.

Cushing, circa 1844, Scully at North Territorial. Used for storage.

Merrill, first school built 1836. Present building at Merrill and Barker Roads, private residence.

Mary Hawkins, first school, 1831, Joy and Zeeb, private residence.

RETIREMENT HOME

Fr. Alexander Miller, a retired Episcopal priest, and his wife, Dorothy,

now live in the Merrill School, mentioned above.

"If you go north on US-23 to exit 52, then left (west) on Barker Road it will terminate at Merrill Road right in front of our schoolhouse."

"You are welcome to drive out and see it, and, if we're home, we'll gladly brew you a cup of tea.

"Since Ann Arbor is my hometown and Dorothy used to teach at the University, we wanted to retire in this vicinity. One day in our wanderings around the country we saw this wonderful little school.

"We eagerly awaited August 1, 1952, when it was to be auctioned off by the Dexter School District with whom they had combined. By going way over what we said would be our top dollar, we were able to purchase it.

"It was an hour from where we worked in those days. We spent all summer there.

"We had running water (waving his arms in a hand pumping motion, and a splendid double two-holer out back and that was the best building on the campus. As a matter of fact, it still is. It's now a dandy woodshed."

The first Merrill School of log was a little over one-half mile east on the south side of Barker Road. In 1848 they moved the building physically from the top of the hill to the present site.

In 1850 they built the present building. It has hand hewn oak sills, 10 by 10 inches and 8 by 8 corner posts. All of wooden barn construction, it's very sturdy. It was closed in 1949.

"A dry sink just inside the front door drained right down onto the front sill. We had to replace it. At the same time we had to get rid of a very large beehive that was inside the walls."

They acquired the half-acre property with a quit claim deed. When they tried to put in plumbing they couldn't get a successful perk test. They were able to buy a half acre to the south and get successful drainage there.

"We didn't put any partitions in the building itself except in one corner for the john. That's now a pantry because, subsequently, with the help of an architect friend we did add on to the back.

"You go up six steps to two little bedrooms and bathroom and downstairs to my office and utility room. We did insulate it.

"In place of the five south windows, that were up so high kids couldn't look out, we did take out the middle three and put in a picture window. We get a lovely picture of about a million birds and a lot of squirrels and grape vines," Fr. Miller said.

The next part of the program dealt with five schools preserved or in process of being preserved as school museums--two in Washtenaw County and one each in Jackson, Livingston and Oakland Counties.

LOWDEN SCHOOL MUSEUM

Dan Makarewich, who is leading the effort to move and re-erect one-room Lowden School on the Lincoln Consolidated School campus, said the school was built in 1853.

"The Lowden family moved to Augusta township from the state of New York in the 1830s. In 1853 they donated approximately one-third acre and the school was named after them.

"It worked as a one-room school until 1924 when it was consolidated with 12 other one-room districts into Lincoln Consolidated.

"It was sold as a residence in 1924 and stayed so until the early 1980s. About three-and-a-half years ago members of our soon-to-be committee were told the owner was selling and the new owner wanted nothing of this building.

"We knew that it was part of the Lincoln district and we got permission from the school district to move it onto the school campus about three miles away.

"It was in dire shape. We had to tear it down. There wasn't much left to save except for the frame itself. It took close to a year and a half to tear it down and clean up the site with volunteer help.

"We started some fund raisers. We have not asked, nor do we want to get any aid from the school district itself. We do not want to be beholden to the tax payers for this project.

"This past August we moved it to the current site on the Lincoln campus near the corner of Whittaker and Willis Roads. We have been working on it continually to get it ready for winter. It is 24 by 28 feet.

"When we can get the interior finished, our plans are that the school will use it. Classes can go there for an hour, half a day or all day and use it as a school of the 1880s approximately.

"We are in the process of getting McGuffey Readers, slates, slate pencils, benches. We want to involve the kids because it's for them. We want to get high school classes working on some of the carpentry work and landscaping.

"We want to get younger kids working. Next spring we want to plant an herb garden and other things. So our goals is to use it as a one-room school but also as a location for the history of the district, this being one of the original 13. Six are still in use as homes.

"We are in the process of organizing an ice cream social next spring. We want to make it a community event around the schoolhouse. Now that they can see the building and, little by little, its looking better, we hope to get more community involvement," Makarewich said.

HICKS SCHOOL MUSEUM

Liz Colone of Pinckney told about the Hicks School on East M-36, east of Pinckney, which the Pinckney Historical Society has restored.

"It is the last remaining country school in Putnam township nearly in its original state. The Pinckney Community Schools own it and permit the local historical society to use it in exchange for complete maintenance."

It was built in 1849 and used as a school room into the 1970s. The society meets there each month.

It was probably named for the farm family owning land around it, she said.

The only other remaining one-room school in Putnam township (Livingston County) is the Hause School, or Hause Hall as it was known. It was moved to Pinckney to the grounds of the then high school to be used as a classroom. It is now occupied by a print shop.

'FRACTIONAL' FACTS

Whenever country school districts come up for attention, some of them are identified as "fractional" districts.

"Fractional" simply means that part of the district lays in another township from the one the schoolhouse was physically in.

The editor attended a one-room school that was fractional with four townships.

Rural districts did not follow township lines or even county lines.

As a result, today some children living in border areas of Washtenaw County attend school in neighboring counties while some Washtenaw districts dip into surrounding counties.

"Originally there were ten one-room schools sending students to Pinckney High School, all named for pioneer families with descendants still living in and around the area," she said.

LINCOLN SCHOOL FIRST OF KIND IN 1924

Lincoln Consolidated School in Augusta township was the first all-rural consolidated district in the country in 1924 and the first consolidated district to work as a laboratory school for Michigan Normal, now Eastern Michigan University.

"Once a year now children come from Hamburg and Pinckney Schools to the Hicks School to fill the eight grades. Last year they came with lunch buckets and an apple for the teacher. Some dressed in period costume."

WASHBURN SCHOOL MUSEUM

Gail Smolarz of South Lyon was not able to be there to talk about the Washburn School they moved to a park near the Witch's Hat Depot which they also moved and restored.

DEWEY SCHOOL MUSEUM

Helen Hannewald, who has charge of the Dewey School in Jackson County, talked about the restored brick school which is operated on its original site by the Waterloo Historical Society. The annual Pioneer Days the previous weekend had brought a lot of visitors to the school and farm museum.

It has been a school museum since 1963, she said. At first it was only open Sundays and holidays but in 1968 Stockbridge and Grass Lake Schools started sending children for a day.

"In 1984, the Stockbridge School System adopted the Dewey School as a resource place and every child in second grade gets to spend a school day at Dewey.

"It's a delightful experience," Mrs. Hannewald said. "The children are most eager."

"Our mission is to foster in children and adults an understanding of, and appreciation for, the pioneer farmers of Michigan, their family life and their children's schooling," she said.

"It's nice to get that feedback that the children enjoy it-that's what its all for," Clements said. "The day I was up there they thought the outhouse was very enjoyable, too. There was a line-up."

TOWNHALL SCHOOL AT EMU

A couple of years ago the Townhall School was moved form Pittsfield township to the Eastern Michigan University campus in Ypsilanti, Clements said.

Rochelle Balkam, a teacher and professor of local and Michigan history, told about the effort to restore it.

"The building was dedicated two years ago tomorrow (October 22)," she said. "I hate to throw cold water on a project but it still sets. Nothing has been done to the interior."

"Last February there was three feet of water in the basement. There is still water in the basement. The University has put a sump pump in but have not connected it."

"This is particularly important to me. because as he indicated, I teach Michigan history at EMU and I teach local history at Ypsilanti High. I have been teaching 29 years now, and in that 29 years, it's probably one of the most frustrating things with which I've had to deal."

"As many have mentioned, the one-room school was for elementary students, but I think high school students really need to be involved."

"We are all worried about vandalism, crime, crack, about this, that and the other.

"Last week I took my students on a tour of a historic district in Ypsilanti and they now understand their community. They walk around, touch the buildings, go to the cemetery. Don't forget the high school kids," she emphasized.

"Townhall School was moved on one of the hottest days of summer 1988," she continued. "It was about 103 degrees. I walked about two thirds of the way with the school on its move from Morgan Road to the temporary site on the EMU campus."

"Getting across the overpass over I-94 left only about two inches on either side. On Huron River Drive the flatbed truck developed a flat tire," she continued.

"There was controversy about where on campus this building should be. My first choice was central campus near Sherzer or Starkweather Halls. That's not where it is. It's behind Rackham in, essentially, a gully. With the drainage problem it has cost $10,000-$15,000 more than it should have."

"If it were on flat ground this would not have happened. They have done nothing on the interior and have already spent $181,000. They are now telling us we need to raise another $9,000."

"The reason it is so expensive is because it is on University property. The University technically owns it."

"I have heard all these wonderful stories about volunteers. Nothing can be done by volunteers. Contractors are willing to come in and do this and that. But we cannot use them because the University unions have to do the work in their own time frame."

"In the meantime Sherzer burned. That cost the University so much money and time. The new school of education building is near completion--that was a priority. One thing after another had interrupted this project."

"Also, former EMU President John Porter and his wife were committed to the project and Mrs. Porter was on the Townhall School Committee," she said. "The new president and his wife have not yet committed to the project although Dr. Scott Westerman, Dean of the School of Education, is to meet with him soon."

Hannah Geddes Wright, a member of the last class to be in Townhall School in 1957, is on the EMU committee and she was able to give them a great deal of insight, Professor Balkam said.

EMU TO RESTORE SCHOOL BUT NOT OUTHOUSE

We have run into controversies in moving Townhall School from Pittsfield Township to the Eastern Michigan University campus in Ypsilanti, Rochelle Balkam, said.

One was whether we should put up the outhouse. I got outvoted. They said you can't because college students will tip over outhouses.

"My grandfather talked about it. It was good clean fun to tip over the outhouse. They did it once when there was a teacher in it. But college students today wouldn't think of it, she believes.

Mrs. Wright's father owned the land on which the school stood and, of course, the Geddes family is one of the oldest families in the county.

"Someone mentioned that once you

get the school on site, people are willing to donate. That is true, but we are running into a problem in turning people down that want to give us things that we're not sure we really want."

"That's something else you have to look out for. You have to have a policy for de-accessioning things you might not want and yet try not to make people feel bad who are willing to give things."

"In a year or so, we hope to have the program in place," she said.

She noted the Geer School on Plymouth Road in eastern Washtenaw County is being restored by the Plymouth Schools.

GLEASON SCHOOL NOW HOME

Sue and Joe Becker, a young couple who live in the former Gleason School on Goodrich Road in Saline township, spoke next.

Sue grew up in the former Lancaster School on US-12 near Clinton which her parents bought in 1957, the year before she was born. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Prong, accompanied her to the WCHS meeting along with a former teacher of Lindsley and Bridgewater Station Schools.

"It is a lot of work, This past summer we put a new roof on our house. We found there were five to seven layers of old shingles. The rafters all had to be replaced. It was more work than expected."

"It is a lot of work to take care of the building. The enjoyment comes from history. We live out near Macon. A lot of the people that we live by went to school in our house. They stop by, knock on the door and say "can I come in."

"They bring pictures. They say "my grandma taught here." I get out my records and find her name. We made a lot of friends. Also, joining the Saline Historical "Society helped us."

"When we were looking for a house," Joe Becker related, "we saw a little ad in the paper that said "old school house". When we got in my wife immediately was opposed to it because it had been remodeled into a home in the 1950s and was not recognizable as a school."

"After thinking about it, she decided those things can be changed. We ended up buying it. Four years later we are about one-quarter of the way done.

"The people we bought from knew it had been an old school. That's all they knew. They didn't know the name of the school or anything else."

"Sue has taken a lot of time with the historical society finding names and contacts. She gets pictures and takes them to people who went to the school to find out who is in the picture. Its a neat task--you hear a lot of neat stories."

Sue has never taped anyone but she writes down what they say and, by accident, is putting together a book. Even former students in North Carolina and Florida send her letters and tell her stories.

The school started in 1854 and closed in 1942.

"I bet I have at least half the students names that went there. I love it when I see a stranger coming to my door."

The school is between Saline and Macon on Goodrich Road just north of Lenawee county. It is number six in the Saline "Tour of Country Schools" brochure which the Beckers helped produce.

"The schoolroom had previously been divided into two rooms, a large kitchen and living room with a little door between.. We opened up that doorway and make a big archway so it's more a big room," Sue said.

They added two bedrooms and a hallway. The new addition has oak floors, the original school had maple floors. The oak and maple meet right in the middle of the hallway, she said.

"We're the fifth owners. I think everyone else was kind of ashamed of it being a school and tried to hide that fact."

Sue got records and books from a family around the corner who had gone there, taught there and he was on the school board. She also got a school desk from them. "When you walk in my house, it looks like a museum."

They do not have a basement. They have an oil furnace in a little utility room off the kitchen.

They got permission to take some wainscoting out of the old Salem Lutheran School, before it was burned, to use in their kitchen.

Clements recalled how they climbed to the top of Salem Lutheran School to get the bell that Memorial Day, took it to Gleason School only to find Gleason never had a bell.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Clements then asked U-M Professor David Angus to comment on what should be done in the future to preserve country schools.

"I didn't learn very much myself about country schools until the mid-1970s, despite the fact I was trained as an educational historian. It's an incredibly neglected aspect of our colleges and universities that are training teachers," Professor Angus said.

"I can tell you that since I discovered the one-room school, the major problem for me was to avoid becoming overly romantic about them. I have to guard against that, as a historian, to prevent seeing this as perhaps the finest hour of American education."

"It had other difficulties. There were some negative aspects of use and siting. We didn't always put them on tops of hills. We sometimes put them in swamps because we didn't think the land was good for anything else. But that's not the major part of the story."

FUTURE TEACHERS NEED TO STUDY RURAL SCHOOL

"EMU still turns out the largest number of teachers of any school in the United States. You can go anywhere and find alumni from EMU," Professor Balkam said.

"That is why it is so crucial that we move the Townhall School restoration project in the direction it needs to go.

"I feel the one-room school was very important and the values that were taught in them were very important. So I've been looking for so long to getting this going."

"Several hours of slides, tapes and discussions of one-room schools from a very important part of my course for incoming teachers in the history of education."

"It was mentioned earlier that the values of the one-room school remain important today and need to be continued."

"My approach is even beyond that. I think the values that embody the one-room school, the values that created them in the first place, the values of community and rooting educational control in the lives of the people whose children you are dealing with are equally important values."

"They are probably more important than the in-school values themselves. So I present this chapter in American educational history in that vein.

"To greatly oversimplify the story, my position on this is that there has

been a centuries old tug-of-war between professional educators on the one hand and ordinary people on the other in terms of what education ought to consist of.

"For the most part, professionals have won that battle, but in winning it they have lost a lot, and today's professional educators ought to be much more aware of the prices that have been paid for wiping out this system, which was something that professional educators did, including EMU wiping out the schools of Augusta township in the name of progress.

"I don't know, frankly, what ought to be done in Washtenaw County. I strongly favor the idea of preservation, anything that can be done. I know how difficult that is, how expensive it is.

"I think its best to preserve it where it is when possible. If you can't do that, move it somewhere and preserve it.

"I think if Washtenaw County had a real good site, I certainly would arrange to make sure my classes visited that site. I think it could be useful in teacher education as well as with second graders and fifth graders.

"I am interested in historically accurate restoration. The one-room school of, say, 1850 was not the one-room school of 1880 was not the one-room school of 1940.

"I would love to see somebody say we want to restore our school to 1850 or thereabouts. That's a lot harder than gathering things out of people's attics and taking it back to the last time it was open as a one-room school.

"I think the one that I would like to see that happen to the most is the one in Salem. I have a particular love of stone schools for some reason. There are only about three or four in the county."

"Anytime they want professional advice on that I'll be there with all the help I can muster, but I can understand if that's too difficult a project," Professor Angus said.

FRAINS LAKE SCHOOL RESTORED

Gene Lutzeier from the audience told about Frains Lake School on Plymouth Road that he presently owns. Township officials told him he could not build a home in it because its too close to the road, it would be nonconforming.

The Lutzeier's moved to the area in 1940 and three of his sons attended Frains Lake School. His daughter, Lisa, has gathered a lot of the history of the school and she has made an audio-visual presentation of it.

When Lutzeier came to the area in 1940, he was appalled at the poor lighting in the school. He managed to get the school board to agree to a lighting survey by Detroit Edison and to get fluorescent lights installed.

Now when his son was restoring it, he had to buy the old discarded lights back at $80 a light. Now instead of 40 watt bulbs they have 100 or 150 watt bulbs, however.

Frains Lake, about two and a half miles east of Dixboro, has been the subject of limnology studies by the University of Michigan for more than 60 years, he said. The U-M leased the school building for ten years from his brother who first bought the school from the Ann Arbor school district when it was no longer used as a school.

PLEASE CHECK MAILING LABEL, IT'S DUES TIME

Please check your mailing label. Besides name and address it reveals your status vis-a-vis WCHS.

If dues have been paid for 1990 or 1991, it will so state on the line above your name. If it says "complimentary" you are on our permanent complimentary list (other societies, libraries, etc.).

If there is nothing above your name you have been receiving complimentary copies this fall to introduce you to our Society and our new museum-to-be.

You will soon receive an invitation to join the Society for 1991. The dues are modest and you will continue to receive *The Impressions* if you join. We hope you will.

KEMPF HOUSE FEATURES GERMAN FAMILY HOLIDAY

Kempf House, 312 South Division, will be decorated for "A German Family Christmas" beginning Friday, November 30, when the annual caroling party will begin at 7:15 p.m.

Carolers can warm up around the oldest grand piano in town and carol around town with the Salvation Army Band.

The brown bag lunch lectures continue with a program on the Allmendinger family, November 14; Grace Shackman, "Sears Houses," November 21; and Marilou Warner, "Wreaths of Ivy," November 28.

December lunch lectures will be Mary McPeek, "Bobbin Lace, Heritage and Gifts" on the 5th; Robert Schweitzer, "Additional Catalogue Homes," the 12th; and Jane Robertson, "The Old Fashion Carol Sing," the 19th. Lectures are 12:15-12:50 p.m. Coffee and tea furnished.

Kempf House will be open for tours 1-4 p.m. November 17-18 and 10 am.-3 p.m. Wednesdays in November and December. Closed Thanksgiving weekend.

LIGHTHEARTED TOPIC

Richard M. Doherty, past-president, Detroit Society for Genealogical Research, will talk on "Serendipity, A Lighthearted Look at Genealogy" at the Washtenaw Genealogy Society meeting, 1:30 p.m. Sunday, December 2, Washtenaw Community College. Social hour follows at 3:30 p.m.

ST. JOSEPH CHURCH, DEXTER, 150 YEARS OLD, GREAT LAKES BANCORP, MILAN'S HACK HOUSE 100

WCHS has presented three anniversary certificates recently congratulating St. Joseph's Catholic Church of Dexter on its sesquicentennial and Milan's Hack House Museum and Great Lakes Bancorp of Ann Arbor on their centennials.

The first Catholic church in the Dexter area was built in 1840 in the center of Dexter township at Dexter Townhall and Quigley Roads. An old church cemetery is still there.

In 1854 the wood church burned and the second church was built in the village of Dexter. The present brick church on Dover Street, started in 1872, was dedicated January 3, 1875. It cost $20,000.

Father Richard Morse, new pastor, Sister Paraclita and Michaelina Brown accepted the framed certificate at the October WCHS meeting.

Milan's Hack House, now the Milan Historical Society Museum, was 100 years old in 1988. A framed certificate was presented at their October meeting.

Great Lakes Bancorp, formerly Ann Arbor Federal Savings and Loan, was founded December 27, 1890, in Ann Arbor as Huron Valley Building and Savings Association. Their framed certificate has been delivered. Their big company celebration will be December 8.

NEW LIGHT ON THE AGE OF WCHS'S MUSEUM BUILDING

By Susan Wineberg

After the Kellogg-Warden house was moved from 1015 Wall Street to its new home at 500 N. Main Street, our architect Gary Cooper (of Quinn-Evans Architects) noticed some peculiarities of the framing construction which had not previously been visible.

Cooper noticed that the rear portion of the house is framed with large hand-hewn beams with quite rough saw marks and hand formed floor joists — some even with the bark still on them!

The front portion of the house, on the other hand, is framed with more precisely sawn beams and with joists connected by more sophisticated tenon joints.

This led him to speculate that the rear portion of the house, which we had previously thought was an addition to the front, is actually the oldest part of the house.

A number of us on the Museum Planning Committee were curious to actually see what he was talking about so we made a trip to view the underside of the house in early September (before the house was to be dropped down on its new basement).

We all agreed with Cooper that the rear portion of the house on the side now facing Beakes Street is probably the oldest section of the house. A second large beam in this rear portion effectively separates it into two sections, and perhaps explains the presence of the two doors on this side.

Photo by Karen O'Neal

Architect Gary Cooper and Susan Wineberg inspect underside of Kellogg-Warden house for tell-tale signs of age.

The front of the house thus was probably the third and largest section built, while the fourth (on the north rear) was added still later. A diagram drawn by Cooper illustrates the evolution of the structure (I have numbered the pieces in the order in which we believe they were constructed).

How can we fit this into the historical information collected so far? The deed tells us that Thomas Peatt paid $300 for this lot in 1835, while he paid only $125 for four adjoining lots. This clearly indicates that the first section of the house was probably built that year.

Two years later, in 1837, Dan W. Kellogg purchased these five lots from Peatt for $1,075.00! It is likely that houses were built on the other lots but it is also possible that Peatt constructed the second portion before selling this structure.

It is more likely, however, that the second portion was built by Dan Kellogg, for he sold the five lots to his brother-in-law Ethan Warden in 1838 for $1,300.

In 1839 Charles Kellogg — the patriarch of the Kellogg-Warden Family — arrived from New York State and purchased only two lots from Warden for $1,800.00.

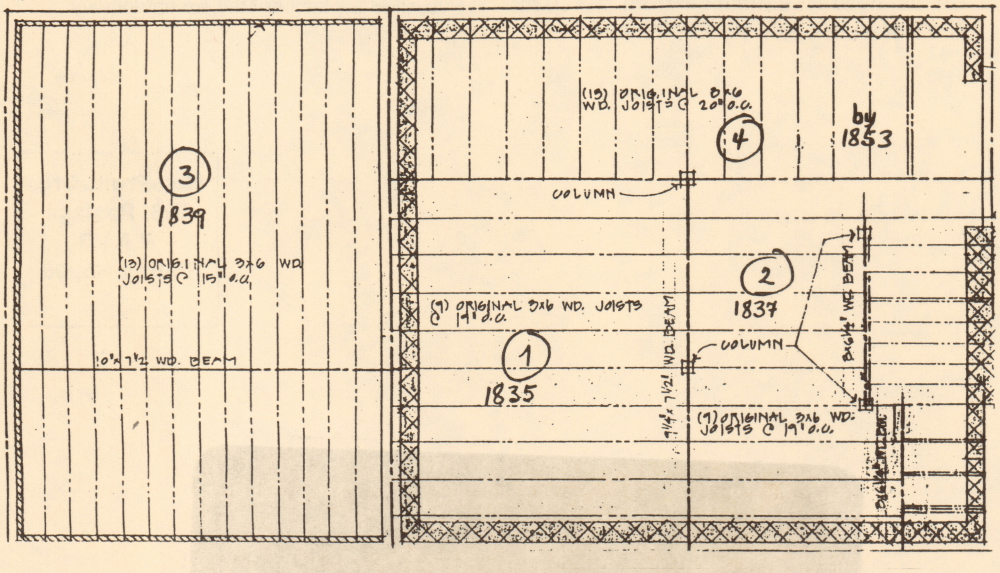
This seems to be a clear indication that the front portion had already been constructed by this date, probably in anticipation of Charles' arrival with his wife and Warden's wife.

The fourth portion of the house appears to have been built by 1853 when the first surveyors maps of Ann Arbor indicate a completely rectangular building on this site.

Charles Kellogg lived here until his death in 1842 and the house was probably occupied by his wife until her death in 1844. So it is possible that the fourth section could have been added in the early 1840s.

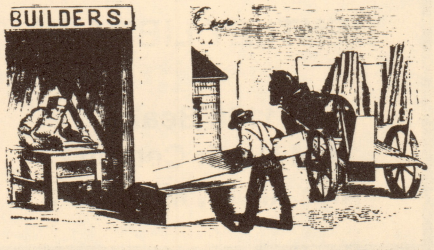
Later surveyors maps (1869 and 1870) show an additional ell on the rear of the building. This must have been demolished (or more likely moved somewhere else).

I am still waiting to hear from the Cayuga County Historical Society in Auburn, New York to see if they have any documentary materials which might shed further light on the construction of the various pieces of our new museum building. Until then, I think our estimates for the dates of each portion of the house will have to be somewhat speculative.



Sketch by Gary Cooper

The present house seems to have been built in four installments from 1835-1853 as shown. The main part of the house, part 3, facing Main Street on left, is believed to have been built in 1839.



HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS INVOLVE:
WITCH'S HAT DEPOT, SALT, ANTIQUES, LOTS OF CHRISTMAS INSPIRED ACTIVITIES

Chelsea Historical Society: The Society will decorate the depot for Christmas and have a new display of antiques by Mary Jo Miller, local dealer, up by Sunday, December 2, when the Chelsea Community Hospital Auxiliary has a holiday house tour 4-8 p.m. Tickets at depot.

Ms. Miller will also open her house, featuring antique collections and holiday decor, for a tour by the Society, open to the public, in December.

Also in December, author-publisher Thomas Zieziul will read from his just published book, *Sticky: The Christmas Tree Nobody Wanted*, at the depot. Call Kathleen Clark, 475-7047, for reading, tour dates. Election of officers in November.

Dexter Society: Annual Christmas bazaar 9 am.-4 p.m. Saturday, December 1, at museum. Annual family Christmas Sing 7 p.m. Friday, December 14 at museum with visit from Santa, refreshments. Luminaria will light the village on Christmas eve.

Annual family potluck and tree-trimming 6:30 p.m. Thursday, November 15, at museum. Meat and beverages furnished.

Annual meeting 8 p.m. Thursday January 3, at museum, 3443 Inverness. Museum closed January through April except by appointment. Information: 426-2519 or 426-3352.

Manchester Society: 7:30 p.m. third Tuesday at Blacksmith Shop, 324 East Main, in November and January. Annual Christmas party December 18 at location to be announced, with caroling, cookies and cooky auction for Manchester Family Service. Information: 428-9312 or 428-9233.

Milan Society: 7:30 p.m. third Wednesday at Hack House, 775 County Street.

Pittsfield Society: 2 p.m. first Sunday at Pittsfield Town Hall, State and Ellsworth.

Salem Society: 7:30 p.m. third Thursday, November 15. The society will meet at the Witch's Hat Depot at South Lyon. Information: 455-8554.

Saline Society: Fourth annual antiques show 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday, December 2, at Saline Middle School, featuring small antiques suitable for gifts. A major fund raiser, the Society expects up to 35 dealers. Admission donation, $2.

Christmas Walk Sunday, December 9, 4-8 p.m. Meet at fire hall on East Michigan Avenue for refreshments and entertainment. Walk to nearby 1909 house for guided tours featuring antique collections, holiday decor, music. Advance tickets, $4 donation, at Pineapple House and Village Loft Antiques. Information: Village Loft, 429-7390 (Tuesday-Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m.).

Regular meetings 7 p.m. third Wednesday, Senior Center, 7605 North Maple Road. November 14, Jim Cameron, Saline High history teacher who will take a leave of absence to set up local history programs in high schools around the state in cooperation with the Historical Society of Michigan, will talk.

In January, a speaker from the Gerald Eddy Geology Center at Waterloo Recreation Area, will talk about the salt from which Saline got its name.

Ypsilanti Society: The museum, 220 North Huron, will be decked out Victorian style for the Christmas open house, 2-5 p.m. Sunday, December 9. It is open to the public free of charge. Refreshments.

The museum will also be open to show off its holiday trimmings from 2-4 p.m. December 13, 15, 16, 20, 22 and 23.

THANKS FOR HISTORY-MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS

- to JERRY MROZINSKI of Ann Arbor Carpets and Fine Rugs for free laying of carpeting in the new WCHS office, 122 South Main, in the former Goodyear Building.
- to NANCY MCKINNEY, DAVID, RUSSELL and LILLIAN FERGUSON for helping pack, move and set up the WCHS office.
- to ALBER ORCHARD & CIDER MILL of Manchester for donation of cider for October meeting.
- to PAT JACKUNAS and PAT JOHNSTON for planning the decorations for our Christmas tree at Englander's. Don't forget to vote for our prize-winning tree!

MAILING HELP NEEDED

Pauline Walters needs one or two volunteers to help label and mail the *Impressions* one afternoon during the second week of the month at the WCHS office, 122 South Main, as well as with occasional other letter mailings. For more information call her weekdays at 662-9092.

SEE YOU IN FEBRUARY

As no meeting is scheduled in January, the next *Impressions* will be the February 1991 issue.

Editor: Alice Ziegler, 663-8826
Address: 537 Riverview Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Mailing: Pauline Walters, 662-9092 weekdays.
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WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2:00 P.M. SUNDAY NOVEMBER 18, 1990

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